(c) the reasons and basis for sanctioning the lesser amount; and

(d) whether it is not an infringement of their rights?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT (SHRIMATI SUBBULAKSHMI JAGADEESAN): (a) to (d) Government of Rajasthan had sought central assistance of Rs. 1808.55 lakh during 2004-05 under the scheme of Post Matric Scholarship to Scheduled Caste Students. Against this amount Rs.1157.87 lakh was released.

Central assistance under the above scheme is released based on the expenditure anticipated by the States/UTs in a particular year. On receipt of actual expenditure figures the unspent balance, if any, is deducted from or excess expenditure incurred is paid as arrears in succeeding year's grant. Based on the actual expenditure for the year 2004-05 the remaining due central assistance has already been released to the State Government during the current financial year 2005-06. As such, there is no infringement of their right.

Similarly Rs. 1761.19 lakh was sought by the State Government during 2004-05 under the Scheme of Post Matric Scholarship for OBC students. No amount was released during that year due to availability of unspent balance of Rs. 308.71 lakh with State Government.

Status of National Commission for Minorities

563. MAULANA OBAIDULLAH KHAN AZMI: Will the Minister of SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT be pleased to state:

(a) what progress has so far been made in according constitutional status to the National Commission for Minorities; and

(b) the steps being taken to expedite the process?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT (SHRIMATI SUBBULAKSHMI JAGADEESAN): (a) and (b) The Government of India has already introduced the Constitution (One Hundred and Third Amendment) Bill, 2004 to insert Article 340A to confer the constitutional status to the National Commission for Minorities on 23.12.2004. The Bill has been referred to the Standing Committee on Social Justice & Empowerment for scrutiny.